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## THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

### AN AQUEOUS TEA.

THE HAPPY INVENTION OF A WELL-KNOWN DESIGNER.

By OTIS S. LEROY.

"CAST your bread upon the waters, and it will be returned after many days."

The above quotation is certainly more suggestive of a sermon, than a "tea." A correctly written sermon has three distinct parts; but as an "Aqueous Tea" is neither sermon, nor the common-place evening meal, it can have any number of "courses," with or without the trio of parts applicable to sermonizing discourses. It was the howling wind time of March, the rush of the season's business was at an end. It occurred to me that I would like to entertain; for a bachelor to open his domain to the housekeeping many; to have a supper served without a kitchen proper, and without seeking outside help from restaurants and caterers, seemed quite an undertaking.

Then, the expense—six or eight courses—champagne, and I wanted to have twelve of these affairs or none. The discouragement given by figures, the items in black and white, resulted in what would constitute the basis of a bank account. But as to the always, two sides—the fun of the thing, the talk that anything with new features always occasions, the advertisement; I determined to risk it.

My domicile was one of those miserable, made-over into business, former palatial home-kind of a structure. Not enough make-over to it for a solid business appearance, and just enough change from the private residence to give one a forlorn feeling of having to live in such an establishment. I occupied the top floor, two back and one front room, twenty-five feet square, a space between rear and front, which formerly was attic and entrance to the roof step-ladder. Ceilings low, and such woodwork—you could neither paint nor putty—and the floors were beyond all redemption. Only the front of the place was to be decorated, the rest reserved for workrooms. I divided the front into two rooms, instead of putting a partition straight through, like the ordinary hall bedroom and square room, I put a partition with an alcove, and on the bias; at the window the small room was nine feet wide, while at the door opposite, the space was fully thirteen feet. I had nothing in the way of partition but a frame of rough pieces of wood; then I covered my partition, both sides, walls, ceiling and woodwork with burlaps.

The small room was the reception room as it were; burlaps was shirred on the ceiling, plaited on the side walls, with a dado all round of fancy straw matting. In the larger room it was simply hung from the ceiling to the floor. I had a few artistic pieces of furniture, and quantities of embroideries, and portieres which were, of course, of great assistance. The outside hall was enclosed, making the entrance at the head of the stairs; it was an L shaped space, and I built a board partition all round the banisters. The interior of this small space was a marvelous place, a combination of Madison Square theatre style, with Eastern splendors—a Golconda dream realized. I covered the interior with muslin, then, cathrage paper, in old blue, gray-green, pale terra cotta. I folded newspapers into bands, full length and four inches wide, and covered my bands on both sides with the above-mentioned colors of cathrage paper. I took these long strips and braided them, as children do when they cut up writing paper in strips and make watch pockets, and brought over the ends in long loops; when on the ceiling they were as large around as a barrel, and hung down umbrella-shaped, and four of these things covered the ceiling. From the center of each I hung a fairy lamp, and in between the spaces, decorated with curtain-rings and button-molds, bronze-powdered in green, silver and iridescent red. I also made a frieze, the design being made with the bronzed rings and molds. I reserved a small space at the front door as a vestibule, upholstering walls, and a peaked ceiling in gold Japanese paper cloth. The front door on the inside was covered with a cloth of gold, embroidered portiere. The vestibule had a red glass window, it was immediately under the large skylight in the outside hall, and filled the interior with a rosy light during the daytime. Where the banisters turned to go into the side wall of the building I had another window—rough ground glass, covered with a lattice-work I made of thin pieces of wood, and the instices filled with cut glass jewels cemented on the glass. It made a very pretty window, a stained glass effect without being in the least common. I made a transom out of the same glass; carpenter put in a frame, placed it across one corner; had a small shelf behind, on which were three lamps. A piece of tin at the top protected the ceiling. I took three wooden plaques to a scroll mill and had them sawed out in a design; lined each with a different colored tissue paper; fastened them on to the glass with stratenas, bulging side out and from the transom to the floor; hung a showy curtain in red plush and yellow satin. Behind I put some hat

pins, and it served as a corner for guests to lay their wraps. When the lamps were burning behind the glass, my scroll plaques showed up very fine. Then I made a lantern out of three brass picture frames, cutting out the mats around the glass, fastening them together with fine wire, leaving one frame to open like a door; put in a pasteboard bottom and gilded the inside with gold paint, and with stratenas fastened jewels on the glass, hanging it with three curtain chains, the place being so small. When the five fairy lamps were burning, with different colored lights hanging from their queer-looking paper umbrellas, the illuminated transom and picture frame lantern, the effect was quite remarkable—a place you read about, but never see; and after climbing the old stairs, the utter and overwhelming surprise of all guests, when the front door was opened, and behold this queer-looking place, a blaze of light, I felt repaid for the laborious ordeal I went through in getting it all ready.

I had a table covered with burlaps; a common, small \$1.25 kitchen table; legs were wound with burlap; burlap border around the top, with a stamped design, at 3 cents per yard, and some burlap drapery. On this table I had a scarf made of an old piece of a Paisley shawl. This shawl was used one summer to wrap ice in. I rescued it and kept it five years, and it is now very oriental, trimmed with copper tinsel and ravelings of Turcoman, in old colors, sewed around the designs in the shawl.

I also upholstered two common cane chairs, woodwork, and everything covered with burlaps, for the chairs I bought a better quality at 22 cents per yard, the burlaps used on walls, only cost 8 cents per yard. I had the carpenter make me a cabinet out of pine boards. Two doors, uneven top, and some shelves. Covered it with olive flax velour. Made a curtain to hide the shelves, and put some tiles, as ornaments, on the doors. I purchased a \$2.50 Chinese goat skin. Had two rows of pinked felt, next to the fur grey felt, outside olive green; lined it with canton flannel, and put plenty of cotton in the centre to make it look full and thick. It is the lining and pinked felt that make these cheap skins look finished, and, at the same time, prevents the hair from coming out, and also makes them much larger. The acceptance of my invitations developed numerous ideas. One young lady, never having been to an "Aqueous Tea," thought the proper way to conduct herself would be to appear "As a pearl of the first water." Another asked if water-proofs and gum shoes would be the correct toilette. Still another said they had thoroughly investigated the word "Aqueous." It was water, or appertaining to running water, and had made up their mind there could be no point in connection with the word "Aqueous" and a "Tea."

I had a small oak table with lids that turned down on either side, not being large enough for four persons to sit at comfortably. I had the carpenter make a new top to rest on the table when open, and at a little to one side of the centre had a 1-inch hole bored through the table and false top. Table was square, had the corners cut off, and put one guest at each corner, which gave the opportunity for a more artistic arrangement of table service. I purchased a large milk pan, and had a small spout and faucet soldered in the centre of the pan. At the top of the window casing, behind the curtains, I hung a tin water pail, and put in it as much water as my milk pan would hold. A small rubber pipe came from the pail under the rugs on the floor, up through the hole in the table and table cloth, and terminated on a nozzle outside the pan. I had but to draw on the spout in the pan with my mouth to start the water, and behold! a fountain, playing in the centre of the table. Turning the faucet off, it was ready for use, and would play 50 minutes, at which time the water in the pail was out, and the pan on the table was full. I fitted a piece of pasteboard around the pan, and sewed on dried grasses; lined the milk pan with clam shells, and ornamented it with ferns and a few flowers. I also had a box of magnetic toys, bull frog, fish, lobster, crabs, etc., which I laid on the shells in the pan. As the fountain filled the pan, the magnetic toys sailed around, a second surprise for the company, they trying in vain to find where the water came from, and how it was managed, particularly as there was no tank on the roof, and consequently no running water on my floor.

I had four candles standing around the fountain, and one candle at each place, all with shades, and I gummed some narrow white lace around the edges of the shades, which greatly improved their appearance. I wanted some very low candlesticks for each place; could not find any, and all were very expensive. I found some small jug-looking vases, at 10 cents each, in plain colored ware; put the candles in; they just fitted. After cutting down a little, and with bobasher of different kinds, looked very presentable.

First came bouillon served in cups. I had some pretty Japanese cups, thin as an egg-shell, although they did not have the two handles, as is proper they should have; they were not in the least common. Second course was salmon, in China fish with their tails turned up, on a large plate, covered with a Japanese napkin, in different colors; a small blue and white bowl to match the fish, with Tata sauce, and a small coffee spoon to serve sauce, two bunches of parsley, with paper rosettes, bread about the length and size of a lead pencil. Next on the programme, was a small

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china tray for each guest, containing a cup and saucer and a small pitcher with spout, so that each one poured their own chocolate; salad, which I took great pains in ornamenting, with capers, beets, celery tops, champagne, but no silver case for the bottle; I was obliged to mortify my flesh into having a napkin wrapped around. Cold tongue I had served by slipping a silver skewer through each slice. When passed, you took the skewer by the handle, and with a fork slide off as many slices as you might want. Next course, a large dinner plate; on that a small fancy oblong saucer, with small piece of cottage cheese, a little dish as large around as a butter plate and about 1 inch deep, containing salted almonds; a little dainty pitcher with cream, and three pieces of toast, very thin, about  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick and 4 inches long. I made some large paper roses, putting a charlotte russe in the centre, and sprinkled blanched almonds over it. My teas wound up with ice cream and finger bowls. I had some colored glass. They were awfully cheap looking, and I mounted them with great fluted edges; but if the finger bowls were mean, they came on the table in a new light. I had a fairy a candle put in the bottom of each, and lit about one-half hour before being put on the table. They looked very pretty, throwing colored lights around the table-cloth. I think some of my guests wondered to themselves if they were to warm their fingers instead of laving them, but when they were to be used the servant came around with a caraffe and filled each, which ended their illuminating powers, and put them to their intended use.

Now is the time for me to air my ideas about servants to wait on table. A handsome dining-room, I think, is just ruined with a biddy flourishing around in an ill-fitting, badly made dress of her own selection. Men are worse, as often in their dress suits they make a better appearance than the guests. I would have a blue jean skirt made with a deep hem, full around the waist. Waist of same material, and have it fit; no home made pucker; do-the-best-you-can kind of an affair; a white mull handkerchief, fastened around the shoulders, Quaker fashion, white cuffs, to go outside the sleeves, white cap, and small apron to hang smooth. Then, when out of the house, if they wish to appear in a dowdy imitation of a Paris dress, a bonnet at \$4.50 that ought to cost \$35.00, why let them; but not have the interior surroundings spoiled by such badly dressed domestics.

### A COMING ART SENSATION.

VASIL VERESTCHAGIN, the distinguished Russian painter, who arrived in this city a few days ago, is destined to make a great sensation in art circles. A robust figure and broad shoulders, surmounted by a head framed in bushy black beard and hair, a benevolent-looking and sunburned face briefly describe the personal appearance of a unique figure in modern European art. He speaks several languages, is original in many of his ideas, is apt in his mode of expressing them, and is frank, affable, and unaffected. As an artist he rebels against "school" methods and traditions, belongs to no "school" himself, but while disdaining to copy, is too great an artist not to prize whatever is worthy in the works of others.

M. Verestchagin was born in the town of Novgored, and almost his entire life has been devoted to art. For five years he studied with the best teachers in St. Petersburg, and afterward for three years with Gérôme in Paris. "I don't think much of the training I had there," he said. "My master sent me to the Louvre to copy the old masters. I would not do it. Why should I? I read books, but I do not learn them by heart." Since 1868 he has been exhibiting his pictures in the principal cities of Europe. He has never showed his pictures at a Salon, but has invariably preferred to be as independent in this matter as he is in the practice of the art itself. As soon as the American Art Association can make arrangements his paintings, about a hundred, will be placed on exhibition.

"I take my subjects wherever I find that which pleases me," he said. "Some artists paint landscapes or beautiful women or animals. I must paint them all. I never paint to order; therefore I put myself into everything I paint. Another point I insist on is that every scene should be painted, as far as possible, under the same circumstances as those under which the event occurred. For instance, it was dark during the crucifixion. I would paint that scene when the earth was dark. A snowstorm I would paint during a snowstorm. When I paint scenes from India I choose a bright, sunny day."

In order to execute these ideas, M. Verestchagin has a revolving studio, so that as the sun moves there may be a corresponding movement of painter and model in order to obtain a constant light. The intense realism of some of his works is very displeasing to some critics. Having painted a number of battle pieces, M. Verestchagin did three to show how men were killed individually, as well as by wholesale. He painted a scene representing the Roman method, or crucifixion; the Russian method, or hanging by the neck, and the English method adopted in India of

blowing from the guns. The two last stirred up bitter criticism in Russia and England. The Emperor and people of Russia were hardly less displeased than when he painted "Alexander II. Watching the Battle of Plevna," seated in a chair at the top of a hill, his head and body leaning forward and his hands resting with crooked elbows upon his wide-spread knees. In England people told him that blowing from the guns was not the characteristic mode of capital punishment. "A hundred years hence they will be appreciated; the pictures will live" is the reflection with which he consoles himself.

M. Verestchagin is a traveler. His Winter studio is in Paris, but he is there little of the time. Africa, Thibet, and India are the remote lands he has visited. While in India he was dogged as a Russian spy till he found a friend and protector in an English general. His sketches of mountain passes seemed very suspicious. While in Samarcand his work was interrupted by a mutiny among the natives, and he was compelled to handle a musket and cartridge box instead of a brush and mahl stick.

### SANITARY HEATING.

The proper heating and ventilating of our buildings constitute the most important elements of comfort and domestic economy. More discomfort and unpleasantness is caused in our schools and households by the ignorance of builders and house owners of the first principles of sanitary heating than from any other cause.

Sanitary heating is the art of reproducing in the house a warmed atmosphere of the freshness and vitality of outdoor air. To do this the cold air furnished to the furnace or radiator must be taken from the outside and passed through the furnace or radiator in abundant quantities without overheating, and rendering it absolutely free from gas, dust and all other impurities. Provision must also be made for removing the air from the room after it has been vitiated by breathing and other causes. When these principles are applied successfully, perfect sanitary heating is obtained.

The Steam and Warm Air Combination Heater, manufactured by the J. F. Pease Furnace Company of Syracuse, N. Y., and Toronto, Canada, is admirably constructed in regard to all that is required for the purposes of perfect heating and ventilation. It has points of merit which are peculiar to itself alone, and which are possessed by no other apparatus.

Mr. J. F. Pease, the inventor of all the apparatus manufactured by this Company (the patents for which they own solely for the United States and Canada), some years ago conceived the advantages to be gained by combining steam and warm air in such a manner as to produce pure warm air without overheating it.

This heater, which is the outcome of this idea, and on which important improvements have been made, is constructed with a plate steel, tubular, upright boiler suspended directly over the fire-pot. This boiler is encased by a dome and radiator, which in turn, is surrounded by a casing of galvanized iron (double lined to prevent radiation of heat in the cellar), with an ample space between, forming the warm air chamber.

The radiating surface is unusually large, and there is no danger of overheating nor burning the oxygen, while the steam may be carried to the same rooms as the warm air, and the heat radiated either by direct or indirect radiators, as may be preferred. In this construction the fuel which produces the warm air generates the steam, and two results are obtained from the same fire, and the steam may be conducted to such rooms as are not accessible by warm air pipes. The cold air is taken from the outside into the warm air chamber of the heater and distributed through the warm air pipes and registers to the various rooms to be warmed, producing pure, warm air. The heater may be set double cased, portable, or in brick, as may be desired, although the double cased portable is considered the more satisfactory, and radiates little or no heat in the cellar.

By combining the steam heat with the warm air a pleasant and healthful summer atmosphere is produced throughout the building, and the air in all the living rooms is constantly being changed, which contrasts strongly with the stifling heat in buildings warmed by direct steam radiators alone where there can be no circulation nor change of air, and consequently the heat is suffocating and unhealthful.

A valuable advantage gained over all steam heating is the ease with which the heater is controlled for all temperatures required. In the chilly days of fall and spring the fire may be run as low as desired, producing just enough warm air to take the chill from the house without making steam at all until wanted, which result, of course, cannot be obtained with an all steam heating apparatus, with which it takes as much fire to make steam on a chilly day in October, as on a cold day in January, and great discomfort by overheating is often the result. The boiler which is constructed in one piece (not sectional), is tested to one hundred pounds both steam and hydraulic pressure, while from one-half to five pounds is all that is required for heating, and provision is made for the steam to escape through the safety valve at ten pound pressure. After the boiler is once filled it only requires about a pail of water per week, as the condensation from the radiators and pipes is returned to the boiler by gravity pressure.

The drafts are automatically controlled by the heater. The apparatus is durable, noiseless, powerful and compact, requiring but little space to set it, and will produce at least 25 per cent. more steam and warm air heat from a given amount of coal than heaters of ordinary constructions. The boiler and entire apparatus can be cleaned inside of twenty minutes, and without dumping the fire.

Persons who may be desirous of more fully understanding the sanitary systems of heating embodied in this improved apparatus, will find a full line of them on exhibition at the Company's New York salesroom, at 206 Water street, in charge of Messrs. Earl B. Chace & Co., practical heating engineers, who have set hundreds of these Combination Heaters in New York City and vicinity. They also carry a full line of the Pease Company's improved Economy Warm Air Furnaces in stock, and are thoroughly equipped to give all necessary information regarding these systems of perfect sanitary heating.